

Amendments to the Claims:

Amend Claim 1.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (amended) A process for chilling and aging front portions of poultry carcasses comprising the steps of:

(a) separating eviscerated poultry carcasses into front portions and back portions in a manner such that said front portions are completely separated from and are no longer connected to said back portions and said front portions do not include any legs;

(b) then conducting a fecal inspection of at least some of said front portions;

(c) pre-chilling said front portions in water; and

(d) then chilling and aging said front portions.

2. (original) The process of claim 1 wherein said front portions are pre-chilled in step (c) by continuously conveying said front portions through an auger chiller.

3. (original) The process of claim 1 wherein said front portions are chilled and aged in step (d) in water.

4. (original) The process of claim 3 wherein said front portions are chilled and aged in step (d) by continuously conveying said front portions through at least one tub chiller.
5. (original) The process of claim 1 further comprising the step, after step (a) and prior to step (b), of washing said front portions.
6. (original) The process of claim 5 wherein said front portions are washed in said step of washing using chlorinated water.
7. (original) The process of claim 5 further comprising the step, after step (c) and prior to step (d), when said fecal inspection of step (b) detects a failure, of delivering said front portions through a reconditioning wash and then to step (d).
8. (original) The process of claim 7 further comprising the step, after step (c) and prior to step (d), of conducting a secondary fecal inspection at said reconditioning wash.
9. (canceled)
10. (canceled)
11. (canceled)
12. (canceled)
13. (canceled)
14. (canceled)

15. (canceled)